

Squash

Squash come in many different colors, sizes and shapes. They have a rind (thick skin) which protects the fleshy part of the vegetable. The center has seeds which are usually scooped out before eating.

Squash are vegetables. Depending on the variety, they either grow on vines or bushes.

Squash originated in North America over 5,000 years ago.

It was one of the "three sisters" planted by Native Americans, along with maize (corn) and beans. Squash was grown and eaten by early Europeans that settled in America.

Squash are in the same gourd family as melons and cucumbers.

VARIETIES

Squash are commonly divided into two groups:

- Summer squash – the rinds are rich in beta-carotene and can be eaten. Zucchini is the most popular variety in the United States.
- Winter squash – usually have a hard rind which is not eaten. Some popular varieties are pumpkin, butternut, acorn and spaghetti squash.



NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- Sodium free
- High in vitamin C

USES

Squash is often cooked, but some summer squash may be eaten raw (try with vegetable dip or add to salads). You may steam, sauté, grill or bake squash. Add to stir-fries, soups and casseroles. Bake in breads, cakes and pies. Sometimes the seeds are eaten.



Glazed Butternut Squash
Preparation time: 45 minutes
Number of servings: 4
Cups of fruits or vegetables per serving: 0.75



2 butternut squash (about 3 lbs.)
½ c. apple juice
¼ c. water
2 T. margarine
1 T. sugar
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. black pepper
¼ c. chopped pecans, toasted
1 tsp. dried sage

1. Peel and cut squash in half and remove seeds. Cut into 2-inch pieces.
2. In a large skillet, stir together squash, juice, water, margarine, sugar, salt, and black pepper.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 25 minutes. Stir occasionally.
4. Remove lid and cook 5 minutes or until liquid thickens and squash is tender.
5. Gently stir in pecans and sage.

Nutrition Information per Serving: Calories 280, Total Fat 11 g (17% DV), Saturated Fat 1.5 g (8% DV), Cholesterol 0 mg (0% DV), Sodium 650 mg (27% DV), Total Carbohydrate 48 g (16% DV), Dietary Fiber 8 g (32% DV), Sugars 14 g, Protein 4 g, Vitamin A 730%, Vitamin C 120%, Calcium 15%, Iron 15%.

Skillet Zucchini with Chopped Tomatoes
Preparation time: 10 minutes
Number of servings: 4
Cups of fruits or vegetables per serving: 1



1 tsp. margarine
1 c. onion, chopped
4 small zucchini, thinly sliced
2 tomatoes, chopped
black pepper, to taste

1. In a large skillet, melt margarine over medium heat.
2. Add onion and cook, stirring until softened.
3. Add zucchini and cook for 2 minutes.
4. Add tomatoes and cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until zucchini is crisp-tender.
5. Season to taste with pepper.

Nutrition Information per Serving: Calories 50, Total Fat 1 g (1% DV), Saturated Fat 1 g (3% DV), Cholesterol 0 mg (0% DV), Sodium 20 mg (1% DV), Total Carbohydrate 11 g (4% DV), Dietary Fiber 3 g (12% DV), Sugars 5 g, Protein 2 g, Vitamin A 15%, Vitamin C 60%, Calcium 4%, Iron 4%.